

THE OLD SHAWL
By Jessie Ethel Sherwin

"It will be a long good-by," spoke old Mrs. Marsh sadly.

"Don't talk that way, Aunt Julia," remonstrated Hector Vaile, her favorite nephew.

"No use of looking at things so darkly," added her other nephew, Willis Craine.

"The doctor says my only chance of getting through the winter is to go to a warmer climate," proceeded Mrs. Marsh. "It won't be home and that is why it won't do me any good. Now then, boys, I want to have a serious talk with you. Both of you have my love. You have been kind and loyal to me, a childless old widow. I expect my lawyer here within an hour. I want you, here and now, to decide as to my little property. You know of what it consists—the old home here, the house in the city, which my poor, foolish husband made a hobby of, and found it hard to live in on account of the expense."

The eyes of Willis glowed. A certain eagerness came into them. Hector only looked sorrowful. He was not thinking of money or property. To him this dear old relative had been as a mother. He would miss her, even if her absence were only temporary.

"Of course, all my ideas are to make a record in the city," Willis spoke first. "I have great ideas if I can carry them out."

"Aunt, leave me the old home, if it is necessary to decide about your property. I feel my place is here, in my native village, and I can see that Willis is more ambitious and gifted than I," said Hector.

"Then that is settled," said Mrs. Marsh, with a misty, approving look at Hector. "And the shawl I have been knitting for so many years goes with the home and all there is in it. Unless you marry some high-up belle of fashion, Hector, your wife will be

glad to wrap it around her on cold winter days."

"We will leave the high-up belle of fashion to Willis, Aunt Julia!" laughed Hector. "In fact, I think he has his eye on one such there already."

Willis looked embarrassed, then rather proud. He was of the flashing, buoyant sort, and he secretly despised what he called the old-fashioned humdrum ways of his cousin.

"I shall always keep the shawl as a cherished memento, aunt," de-



Took Hector to the Front Door

clared Hector loyally, and so the matter was settled. Mrs. Marsh had spent most of her leisure time knitting, and Hector thought tenderly of the tired old fingers that had assuaged ennui and pain through occupation.

Mrs. Marsh was right in her prophecy. She never saw the old home again. Her legacies were easily arranged and within the year Hector found himself the legal owner of the